

November 19

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **1 Kings 5:17 (NIV)** ¹⁷ At the king's command they removed from the quarry large blocks of high-grade stone to provide a foundation of dressed stone for the temple. **1 Peter 2:5 (NIV)** you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Several years ago, after reading the passage about our being living stones, the Lord gave me a picture of trying to build a doghouse out of turtles. When we pick up a turtle, it will pull into its shell. When that happens, we can place it where we need it. However, as we continue building our doghouse, those turtles will start to stick out their heads and look around. Sensing no danger, they will begin waking away. So, we have to pick them up again, causing them to retreat in their shells, and place them in position. Once again, they will look around, feeling all is good, and will go their own way. I laughed at that image and at the futility of building something with living stones.

When the Lord had finished, I understood why He gave me that picture. We are His handiwork. He has saved us and shaped us to fit into His body to help spread His kingdom on this earth. He has prepared in advance good works for each of us, and He knows where to place us. When He does, we are to stay put and fulfill the good works He has planned for us. Yet, we can act like those turtles. When we hit difficult times, we run to the Lord and seek His help, guidance, and protection. As long as the "danger" lurks around us, we stay where He placed us. However, after a while, we stick out our heads and notice that the "danger" has passed, so we begin to stray. We feel constrained by our placement and yearn for the world. We are living stones, the building blocks of Christ's Body on this earth. As living stones, we have the ability to stay put and fulfill God's purpose for our lives, or we can return to the world to pursue our own desires. Nevertheless, Jesus will not abandon us. He will continually move in our lives so that we will find our place in His kingdom and stay put so we can grow. When we do find that place, a whole new life opens up for us. As living stones, we have the freedom to stay or leave.